

Remarks at a Campaign Reception in Weston, Massachusetts
December 5, 2023

The President. Thank you, thank you, thank you. Please, please have a seat.

I want to thank all of you for making this run possible.

There's two people I particularly want to thank in here, Andre and Roman. Where are you guys? Stand up. These guys—these guys sold—stood on a—on the corner—well, not the corner, on the street near their home for—how many weeks?

Audience member. Ten.

The President. Ten weeks, 30 hours a week, selling—it was a cake, wasn't it?

Audience member. Lemon bars and brownies.

The President. Lemon bars and brownies. They raised \$4,000 for my campaign. Fellas, thank you, thank you, thank you. I truly—I really appreciate it.

To Susan and Ambassador Alan—Mr. Ambassador, I tell you what, we've been hanging out a while. And I can't thank you enough for that introduction and for all you've done to help me and our whole administration.

And a big thank you to all of you.

You know, I was raised by what the Jewish community refers to as a "righteous Christian." My dad—[*laughter*]. No, I'm serious. My dad was a Catholic, like our family is.

And—but he used to come home. He ran an automobile dealership. He didn't own it; he ran it. He'd come home for dinner every night and then go back and close things up. And our dinner table was the place where we sat down to have conversation and, incidentally, eat as kids. I'm serious about that.

My dad used to rave about—rage about the fact that—why would they not let that ship full of Jewish—American Jews come into America from Germany; why, in fact, we didn't bond the railroad tracks on the way to the death camp.

My dad was a well-read high school graduate. He never got a chance to go to college. And he talked about obligation all the time, for real. And so, when I—I apologize for telling this story again to a couple of you, but—when my—each of my children and each my grandchildren reach the age of 14, the first thing I did after their birthday was put them on an—[*inaudible*—and take them to Dachau with me because I want them to see the concentration camp. I wanted them to understand what had happened. I mean, for real. Every one of them. I have two left to go to take with me.

Because my dad also—this is a phrase that's not unique to him, but known to all of you, and that is: Silence is complicity. Silence is complicity.

And so, I've been—I've known every Prime Minister well since Golda Meir. The first time I sat with Golda, there was a guy sitting next to me named Rabin who was her assistant. That's how far back I go. And I've been a strong, strong supporter of Israel from the time I've entered the United States Senate back in 1973.

And you know, it is—as I—as I said, there's a story I tell that—my meeting with Golda after the Six-Day War. She was—I was—went to see her. And she was flipping those maps up and

down in her office, and she was going on. And all of the sudden, she looked at me and said, "Would you like a photograph?" [*Laughter*] And many of you have been to the office. If you walk outside the officer, there's, like, a hallway that's mostly circular, outside.

And we said, "Let's go have a photograph." So I got up, walked there. I'm standing next to her, and we're both standing silently, looking at the photographers.

And we didn't—she didn't turn to me, but she just spoke to me. She said, "Why do you look so sad?"—after she just described the end of Judaism for me. [*Laughter*] And I said—and I started to respond, and I decided I shouldn't.

And she looked at me and said: "Don't worry, we have a secret weapon. We have a secret weapon in our fight." And then I did turn. And I swear to God this is a true story. I recorded it at the time. I said, "What is that?" She said, "We have no place else to go." And I think that's the truth.

Without an Israel that's free and secure, I don't think there's a single Jew in the world that would be fully secure. That's why I've been such an overwhelming supporter. I got in trouble many times for saying you don't have to be a Jew to be a Zionist, and I am a Zionist. I make no apologies for that. That's a reality.

But you know, when this last event occurred on the 6th [7th; White House correction], I spent—I immediately got on the plane and went over to Israel to meet with Bibi with his Cabinet.

And I've known Bibi for 50 years. There's a photograph he keeps on his desk—at least when I'm there, he puts it on the desk—[*laughter*]—and it's 8.5 by 11. It's a picture where he was a young member of the Israeli office in Washington and—Ambassadorship—and I was a young Senator. And I—it was 8.5 by 11, and I wrote in the top. I said, "Bibi, I love you, but I don't agree with a damn thing you have to say." [*Laughter*]

We share a strong, strong support for Israel, but I think there's going to be a real—we were—we have to figure: What after Gaza? What after Gaza?

And one of the things that I think is important—and I've spent hours with the Qataris—hours—to broker and sustain and extend the deal of a pause, the fighting to get the hostages home. More than 100 hostages got out. More than 100. And we're not going to stop working until we get everyone out.

But you know what? In the meantime, I was all—able to convince the Israelis that we had to allow significant more aid into Gaza. And we got up to the point where we were about 150 trucks a day.

But when—when Hamas decided they were ending the—ending the release of hostages, not keeping the deal, and everything fell apart. And we have to get it back on track.

And in my view, and I know a lot of you have real interest in Israel. We can—I could do the whole speech—my whole talk about Israel, but I'm just going to end by saying: I've been working with a number of people in and out of government to figure out what after—what after Gaza. And I think the only ultimate solution is a two-state solution. I've been—I've had that view for a long, long time.

I know Bibi doesn't, and I know others don't. But we're having constant conversations about it.

And I've been very—those of you who know me, and a number of you do know me well, I've been very straightforward and blunt with our Israeli friends in private about what I think they have to do and the burden they have and the commitment they have from me and my administration.

So there's going to be a lot more we have to figure out. And I think that—I just want you to know that I'm not walking away. My administration is not walking away. And I know you're not walking away either.

We could talk a lot more about this, but I just wanted to say that at the outset.

Now, why I'm here today: to say thank you. Thank you, and we need you. *[Laughter]* We need you.

You know, just think about where we were 4 years ago and we are today.

When I came to office, the pandemic was raging, the economy was reeling. In 4 years, Donald Trump lost more jobs than he created. The only other President that that ever occurred to was Herbert Hoover. That's why I occasionally call him "Herbert Hoover" Trump. *[Laughter]*

But all kidding aside, since then, we've made incredible progress, some of which was mentioned a moment ago. We've created 14 million new jobs. More jobs than any—have ever been created by a President a 4-year term, let alone 2½ years.

Record economic growth at 5 percent this last quarter. Record low unemployment—21 straight months of unemployment below 4 percent. And today, the lowest inflation rate of any industrialized nation in the world.

We also confirmed more Federal judges at a historic pace, first Black woman on the Supreme Court.

More women—and by the way, I said—committed my administration would look like America. I have more women in my Cabinet than men, more women in my administration than men. That's because the women in my life are all smarter than me. *[Laughter]* But no, all kidding aside, it's a—and we have a significant number of African Americans, Hispanics. And we just—because it should look like America.

We passed the biggest investment in history to combat climate change and—putting us on course to be 100-percent clean energy electricity by 2035 and meeting the 1.5-degree goal.

The biggest investment of rebuilding America's infrastructure since his—President Eisenhower's Interstate Highway System. And you know, roads, bridges, clean water, high-speed internet, all—and cheap for people, available to people.

And by the way, when we were talking about Boebert and her district—I love these guys—*[laughter]*—it's so much fun to go into their district where they celebrate all that's been done, all of which they voted against. *[Laughter]*

But I promised I'd be a President for all of Americans, whether they voted for me or not. And we're moving the country.

We've rebuilt our alliances that Trump had so badly damaged around the world. And those of you who travel internationally know I'm not exaggerating. That's not hyperbole.

Madeleine Albright was correct. America is the essential nation. The rest of the world looks to us. I could go on.

But today I want to talk about this election and what it's fundamentally about. The future American democracy, I believe, and I've believed for some time is literally at risk. Like I said, I know it don't look it; I'm only 40 years old but—*[laughter]*—40 times 2 and 1. *[Laughter]*

But all kidding aside, I first raised the alarm about American democracy back in the first campaign in 2020. I made a speech in Independence Hall. I've repeatedly spoken about the risk to democracy than Trump poses.

In fact, I was attacked in 2022 midterms for spending so much time talking about the threats to American democracy. While the pundits didn't understand, the voters understood it—what I was saying. The election deniers were defeated all over America.

And now when people look back at 2020, they know I wasn't exaggerating. And thank God, because of people like you, we won in 2020. And I'm not being—it's not hyperbole: because the people like you in this room who gave me the ability to fight the campaign.

I might add, we won more votes than any Presidential candidate in American history: 81 million votes. And now I don't think anyone doubts democracy is more at risk in 2024 than it was in 2020. And I mean that. Because this time we're running against an election denier in chief.

Trump is not even hiding the ball anymore. He's simply not hiding the ball. He's telling us what he wants to do. He's proud to say he killed *Roe v. Wade* by the court he appointed. He's running again to get rid of the Affordable Care Act.

I could go on. But let's be clear about the side—what's at stake in 2024: Donald Trump and his MAGA Republicans are determined to destroy American democracy. And that, again, is not hyperbole. That's a fact. The former President makes no bones about it. Don't take my word for it. Just listen to what he has to say.

To his supporters, he says, "2024 is the final battle." He goes on to say, "I am your retribution." "I am your retribution." And he talks about being—we're on a—we're part of "a failing nation." "Either they win or we win. If they win, we no longer have a country."

When did you ever hear a President of the United States say any of those things—speak anything like that? Trump proudly proclaims himself an election denier. He's the only losing candidate in American history to refuse to accept the will of the people. He didn't even show up at my Inauguration. I can't say it disappointed me, but he didn't. [Laughter] No, I'm serious. Think about that. First President in American history wouldn't show up.

The same man who encouraged supporters to go to the Capitol on January 6, who for hours sat in the dining room next to my Oval Office watching—watching—they threaten his own Vice President, who refused to break his oath. The Vice President refused to break his oath to the Constitution.

And now, the same man is promising to pardon—pardons for those convicted felons and insurrectionists. The same man who said it was time, and I quote, to—"termination of all rules, regulations, and articles, even those found in the Constitution." He's not saying this privately. He's saying it publicly. He's attracting supporters by this language.

Now his supporters are saying he should invoke the Insurrection Act to use the military—the U.S. military domestically—domestically to political opponents and in American cities. If he's returned to office, he said he was going to go after all those who oppose him, root out when he called the "vermin" in America—not a word often used except in Nazi Germany—a specific phrase with a specific meaning. And it echoes the language heard out of Germany in the thirties.

Did you ever think you'd hear a President of the United States speak like that? Not a joke. I—I don't care if you're Democrat, Republican, in—who—whatever your background is.

And then the House once again turned to—to its radical right to a new Speaker, using it as a weapon—using a weapon, the agenda he likes to accomplish. Now, we've already rejected the majority of the American people in the Republican agenda in the House. Can't even get through the Republicans in the Senate.

Trump's new Speaker supports a national ban on abortion under any circumstances, just as we've seen the radical bans in States all across America. And just in the last few days, the

Republican legislature in New Hampshire has come forward in proposal of a 15-day ban—a 15-day ban. After 15 days, all abortions are banned for whatever reason—not 15 weeks, 15 days.

Look, Trump has vowed again to repeal the Affordable Care Act, which would mean 40 million Americans' insurance—40 million immediately. You know that, Doc. Forty million. Parents couldn't get their kid—keep their kids on their policies if they're under the age of 26. They'd all be off the policy. One hundred million Americans with preexisting conditions would be denied health insurance—100 million.

And folks, that's what a stake in American democracy.

You know, we need to meet the moment once again. And all of you understand what freedom means: Tell the truth, have a little bit of courage, hold a mirror up to the Nation and yourself. Ask, you know: "Is this who we are? Can we do any better?"

We don't believe America is dark and negative. We don't believe in a nation of carnage, driven by anger, fear, and revenge. We don't believe that.

We believe we're a hopeful, optimistic nation, driven by the simple proposition that everybody deserves an even shot. We believe this country—the one we live in—is really special.

We're the most unique nation in the world. That sounds like hyperbole. You know, you'd expect, as President, I'd say that, but it's true. We're the most unique nation in the world.

We're the only nation in the world not built on ethnicity, religion, and geography. We're built on an idea, the only nation built on an idea: We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all women and men are created equal, endowed by—you know the rest.

We all deserve to be treated equally throughout our lives. We've never met that goal completely, but we've never fully walked away from it. You know—but that's what Trump wants to do. We're not going to walk away now.

Let me close with this. Every generation of Americans has had to fight to protect our democracy in some way or another. Now it's our time, our turn.

We need—indeed, we need every American—Democrat, Republican, Independent—who loves democracy to join us in 2024. I really mean it. When we do that, we'll have done something few generations have an opportunity to do. That is, we will have saved American democracy.

And those of you who've known me for a long time, you know I'm not given to much hyperbole. I may talk too long, but I'm not given to much hyperbole. *[Laughter]*

But look, this is a fact. I know we can do this. I've never been more optimistic about America than I am today, and I really mean it.

We're at a real inflection point in history. The decision we made in the last few years and the next 4 years are going to determine what we look like the next five or six decades.

It's a whole new era.

We have to remember who in God's name we are. We're the United States of America, for God's sake. And there's nothing—nothing—beyond our capacity when we act together.

And, folks, I know that sounds like hyperbole again, to use it for the third time. But the fact is, think about it: We're the only nation in the world you can name for me that's come out of every crisis stronger than they went in—stronger than we went in.

When I was Vice President, President Obama asked me to get to know Xi Jinping because he was Vice President. So I traveled, overall, 17,000 miles with him. Just he and I, each with a

simultaneous interpreter. We were on the Tibetan Plateau, and he turned to me, and he asked me a question.

He said, "Can you define America for me?" I said, "Yes, I can—one word"—and I meant it. "One word: possibilities. Possibilities."

The reason why when you travel the world, they sometimes talk about the "ugly American" being so self-confident: We've never thought anything is beyond our capacity, from curing cancer this time around to everything we've ever done.

I really mean it. I don't think there's anything beyond our capacity when we do it together.

But I tell you what: If we don't win this time—not because I'm running, and I know it sounds like a self-serving assertion, but there's a new article—there's a new magazine—not new magazine. The Atlantic magazine has a new issue out with 20 major articles by 20 different individuals—20 different commentators or academics—all making the case why American democracy is at risk. Twenty of them—Democrats, Republicans, and Independents.

Folks, this is a big deal, this election. We've got to get it done—not because of me, and I mean that. If Trump wasn't running, I'm not sure I'd be running. But we cannot let him win, for the sake of the country.

God bless you all, and may God protect our troops. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:02 p.m. at the residence of former U.S. Ambassador to Spain Alan D. Solomont and his wife Susan. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel; Supreme Court Associate Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson; Rep. Lauren Boebert; former Vice President Michael R. Pence; Speaker of the House of Representatives J. Michael Johnson; and President Xi Jinping of China. He also referred to his grandchildren R. Hunter, Natalie, Finnegan, Maisy, and Beau Biden, Naomi K. Biden Neal, and Navy Joan Roberts. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : Campaign reception in Weston, MA.

Locations: Weston, MA.

Names: Biden Neal, Naomi K.; Biden, Ashley B.; Biden, Finnegan J.; Biden, Joseph R. "Beau," IV; Biden, Natalie P.; Biden, R. Hunter; Biden, R. Hunter, II; Biden, Roberta M. "Maisy"; Boebert, Lauren; Jackson, Ketanji Brown; Johnson, J. Michael; Netanyahu, Benjamin; Obama, Barack; Pence, Michael R.; Roberts, Navy Joan; Solomont, Alan D.; Solomont, Susan; Trump, Donald J.; Xi Jinping.

Subjects: 2021 civil unrest and violence at U.S. Capitol; 2024 Presidential election; Abortion; Arab-Israeli conflict, peace process; Broadband and wireless technologies; China, President; Climate change; Diversity, equity, and inclusion, improvement efforts; Economic improvement; Federal court nominations and confirmations; Gaza, conflict with Israel; Gaza, hostages held by Hamas; Gaza, international assistance; Hamas political-paramilitary organization; Health insurance, access and availability; Inflation; Infrastructure improvements; Israel, military operations in Gaza; Israel, Prime Minister; Israel, relations with U.S.; Job creation and growth; Massachusetts, Democratic Party event; Massachusetts, President's visit; Qatar, role in mediating Gaza conflict with Israel; Renewable energy sources and technologies; Speaker of the House of Representatives; Supreme Court Associate Justice; U.S. diplomatic efforts, expansion; U.S. Supreme Court opinion overturning 1973 decision in *Roe v. Wade*; Unemployment rate.

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